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NUMEROUS CONVERSIONS TO PROTESTANTISM IN SAINTONGE.—NO. I.

SAINTONGE, (Tarn and Garonne.)
Sept. 16, 1844.

Particulars respecting Saintonge and the introduction of the Reformation into this province. Long continued persecutions. Religious and moral state of the population up to the present time. Influence of popes and evangelists. Mr. Desmoulin's conversion. Commencement of the revival.

I have now cheering facts to communicate to you, and I hasten to perform the agreeable task. I have too often been obliged to relate sad accounts of the intolerance of priests, the injustice of government, and the want of zeal of our Christian brethren, it is consoling to meet sometimes in our way with exhibitions of the power and love of the Lord.

We will first take some notice of Saintonge, where the remarkable revival of religion among the Roman Catholics has begun, of which I am to speak.

Saintonge is situated in the southwest of France, and borders for some distance on the ocean. The principal city is Rochelle, once one of the most flourishing seaports of the kingdom, but which was almost ruined by the religious wars. In general almost the whole province of Saintonge has suffered much in its temporal prosperity by the intolerance of popery. It is naturally a fertile country, rich in all kinds of produce; the inhabitants are laborious and industrious. But Saintonge is poorer than many other provinces of France, because the Jesuits and Louis XIV. systematically crushed its industry and commerce. Sad effect of religious persecution—not only to oppress the conscience but to retard the mental and physical growth of nations!

The doctrines of the Reformation were introduced into Saintonge by John Calvin. He had been forced in 1534 to fly from Paris; for the doctors of the Sorbonne there carried on a bloody persecution, and sought especially to lay hands upon this theologian of twenty-five years, who had already done great things for the propagation of the Protestant faith. Calvin therefore took refuge in the city of Angoulême, and traversed part of Saintonge, announcing the gospel of God. Not daring to preach in towns, he formed religious meetings in the forests, in the bosom of secluded valleys, and even in caves. Popular tradition shows even to this day these caves, which are called the *grottoes of Calvin*. In them will retreat the illustrious reformer instructed his disciples. He read to them the Word of God, distributed copies of little tracts which he had written for their edification, and with them worshipped the Lord, in spirit and in truth.

The protestants of Saintonge have preserved some interesting anecdotes of the evangelical labors of Calvin. I will mention but one. The reformer was one day in conference with some friends in a cave, and said to them that he had abandoned for ever the Roman church's mass. "But," replied one of his hearers, "the sacrifice of the mass must be right, because it is every where performed throughout the world." "Here is my mass," answered Calvin, pointing to the Bible open before him. Then, lifting his eyes to heaven, he exclaimed with the tone of deep conviction—"Lord, if in the day of judgment thou reproachest me with not having been to mass, I will answer thee confidently. "Lord, thou hast not commanded it—here is thy law; here are the Scriptures, which are the rule thou hast given me—the Scriptures, in which I find no other sacrifice than that of the Lamb, slain upon the cross."

When Calvin, ever persecuted by the popish doctors, left Saintonge to go into Switzerland, his work was continued by faithful servants of Christ. Large numbers flocked to the banners of Protestantism. Gentlemen, peasants, men of every age and condition, embraced the doctrine of justification by faith. Many of the priests even of the monks gave up their impostures and professed the truth. In a word, Protestantism became the dominant religion in the province. The city of Rochelle was regarded as the bulwark of Reformed Christianity in France. There, in 1571, was held the celebrated national Synod, which sanctioned our old Confession of Faith, before queen Jane of Alençon, and the illustrious admiral Coligny.

Historians relate that the manners of the inhabitants were completely changed. No more profane dancing, nor immoral discourse, nor scandalous quarrels. It was seldom that Protestants had law suits or the like among themselves. On Sunday the whole population attended regularly divine service. In the public places, instead of indecent songs, laboring people sang psalms and engaged in edifying conversation. Even children, under pious and careful parents, were free from the habit of swearing, and encouraged the parents to grow in the faith.

Alas! this happy state did not last long. The more faithful the Reformers were, the more popery hated them. It gave the signal of civil war. The massacre of St. Bartholomew taught French Protestants that Rome had sworn to exterminate them. They took arms to defend their faith, their lives, their families, their property. Then arose a fierce struggle, during which piety was often exposed to too strong temptations, and good morals were injured. It is difficult, in the conflict and rage of war, to hold fast communion with the Lord. Still, after more than thirty years of bitter contests, the Protestants obtained from Henry IV. the famous edict of Nantes, and commenced rebuilding their ruined temples.

They had some rest for the first half of the seventeenth century. The Christians of Saintonge showed anew their obedience to the law of the Lord. They devoted themselves to the service of their divine Master. But the blows of persecution were only suspended. The Jesuits acquired a sad influence over the king, Louis XIV. They persecuted him that he might to convert all the Protestants of France, probably if he could, forcibly if he must. Louis XIV. unhappily gave heed to these perfidious counsels. He was a man of small intelligence and much bigotry. His conscience reproached him with having disgraced his station by immoral conduct, and he fancied to expiate his sins by rooting out heresy from his kingdom.

I will not relate these dreadful persecutions: they are known to all the world. Protestants were robbed of their most sacred rights. The priests took away their children to instruct them in Popery. Pastors were banished, churches demolished, members of flocks subjected to horrible tortures from dragons. They were forbidden to hold religious meetings under pain of death, and when they were detected in a meeting, the soldiers fired upon them as upon wild beasts. More dreadful still: the law required the people to commune in the Roman Church, that is to say, to commit sacrilege, for they did not believe the popish doctrines!

Then great numbers of Protestants left their country, shaking off the dust of their feet. Those of Saintonge, in particular, abandoned in crowds their native land, because being near the sea shore they could more easily than others take flight. A governor of this province wrote, ten years after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, that a hundred thousand inhabitants had sought an asylum beyond the kingdom. They went to every quarter of the globe, to England, Holland, Germany, and even the Cape of Good Hope and to North America. You

have now in the United States many of these Huguenot families who went from Saintonge. They formed in New York, Boston, and elsewhere, French churches, which were flourishing.

Still, large was the emigration, most of the Protestants of Saintonge remained at home: some because they were too old or too feeble to undertake so long a voyage; others because they were too strictly watched and could find no way of escape; others still, because they hoped that their persecutors would at last feel some compassion and forbear their cruel tyranny. Vain hope! For more than sixty years intolerance continued its attacks upon this unfortunate people, who opposed to their barbarous enemies only prayers and groans.

We must now consider the effects of this long continued persecution upon the moral and religious condition of the Protestants. Some persevered in the faith with unshaken constancy; but others lost all religion of any kind. Having no pastors, no Bibles, nor pious books, (for they were cruelly deprived of their religious writings,) they could not keep up their knowledge of the truths of the Reformation, and the oral traditions of their fathers were disfigured or forgotten by the children. On the other hand they had an hereditary horror of Popery, which had oppressed, robbed and crushed their fathers, and which the priests had come into their houses with soldiers to command, to commit outrages, and to torment the sick upon their death beds. If they went by constraint into popish churches they gave no attention; and when forced to partake in the Romish ceremonies they mentally disavowed them.

This state of things produced a singular result upon many of the inhabitants of Saintonge. They were neither Protestants nor Romanists. They lived, so to speak, in a neutral state, and it is easy to understand that they fell soon into the saddest ignorance of religion. Superstition took in their minds the place of the gospel, and it was stamped with hatred against the popish clergy. I will give an example. These poor men attributed all natural evils to the priests. Were there fields destroyed by hail? They said—the priests have done it. Did an epidemic sickness take off their elders, they said—the priests have done it. Did they suffer any domestic affliction? Their reply was—the priests have done it. Under all their troubles they cried—"The priests! the priests have brought upon us this calamity!" And the popish curates in the villages were the unwhipped of men, for they every where received the curses of the people.

What wonder? The solution is easy. The priests, of whom we speak, had lost their true spiritual guides; they had, as I have already said, no means of Christian instruction. It is plain then they adopted superstition; for man must necessarily believe in something; if he does not know the truth he will take up with a lie. And as to the form of the superstition what is strange? The priests were the first cause of the misfortunes of the villages. It was therefore natural that in their troubles they should blame the priests. No doubt they were grossly mistaken—the priests were not responsible for the hail nor the epidemic pestilence, of whom we speak, but their cruel, their barbarous persecutions, roused hatred against them, and the charges made against them were, so to speak, the interpretation, the popular commentary on their former atrocities. When the revolution of 1789 gave to all liberty of conscience, several villages of Saintonge immediately drove away their priests: glad to be rid of those whom they regarded as the source of all their troubles. But they did not substitute in their place the ministers of the gospel, of whom they felt no need. Besides, Christian worship was proscribed soon after by the National Convention. Priests and pastors were no longer allowed to perform their religious worship, and atheism seemed to have prevailed all France. When religion came to be established, some priests returned to Saintonge, but without success. They were no longer sustained by the secular power; they could not order, under penalty of imprisonment, attendance on mass, or the partaking of the communion. The inhabitants kept aloof from the churches, being nominally Roman Catholics, and really not belonging to any communion.

Such was their religious position when popes and curates came into this country. They went from house to house offering the Word of God, and speaking of the grace which is in Christ. Many of the inhabitants, became entirely infidel, asked—"What is the Bible? We do not know this nor do we wish to; we have lived thus far without religion and we do not intend to change our course!" Some however had retained vague recollections of the faith of their ancestors. The old men told the young that these popes held the same language with that which they had heard in childhood. These men were in a peculiar manner, and were true traces of Protestantism not wholly effaced. Perhaps God would bless the fidelity and the prayers of the martyrs in their posterity. Perhaps these ignorant men felt that physical enjoyment is not enough, and that man lives not by bread alone.

Attention was awake. Bibles were bought; popes consulted; religious conversations were held by the firesides. Those who had at first shown great indifference became serious. Rich and poor, those who had arrived at old age, and those just entered upon life, exclaimed—"Is not this the religion of our fathers?" And while they lived, with their majors at their head, said to the popes—"We wish to hear what you have to tell us. Come and speak, we will listen to you."

Wonderful! that after a hundred and sixty years, when six or seven generations had gone down to the tomb, from the revocation of the edict of Nantes, the Reformed religion should all at once re-appear in twenty or thirty communes of Saintonge; and this fact is one more proof of the truth of that passage in the Bible: "The wicked worketh a deceitful work." (Prov. ix. 18.) The popists thought they had effectually exterminated heresy in this part of France. But no, look and undeceive yourselves! This religion, which you have persecuted, has risen from its grave, it lives again to guide new generations in the way of salvation.

One man who has greatly contributed to this religious revival ought to be mentioned in our correspondence: it is Mr. Desmoulin. He belongs to a noble family, and has received a very cultivated education. A Romanist by birth, and long attached to the old dynasty of the Bourbons, Mr. Desmoulin has abandoned all his political idols, renounced the superstitions of his younger days, and now spends his whole time, his fine talents, his large fortune, his life, to preaching the gospel. Without being a pastor he fills the office of an evangelist, and the Lord has deigned to crown his labors with the most brilliant success.

Every day, in the morning, Mr. Desmoulin leaves home, the Bible under his arm, and goes sometimes into one village, sometimes into another, to hold religious meetings. He is plain and affectionate in manners, clear and definite in his instructions, full of charity in his reproofs. He seats himself in the humble peasant's cottage, knowing that with God and with his servants there is no respect of persons. The villagers expect his coming with impatience, listen to him with attention, and derive from his discourses always new instruction. I have seen several letters of Mr. Desmoulin; they are imbued with warm piety and express strong confidence that the truth will make great progress in Saintonge.

It is especially in the neighborhood of St. John d'Angely that the revival manifests itself. St. John d'Angely was once an important city; it contained only Protestants, and occupied an important place in our religious wars. But, having been taken by the Romanists, after a long siege, its fortifications were destroyed, and it is now a small place without commerce or influence. The inhabitants have all embraced popery; but the light which shines in the surrounding villages will penetrate also this city, and Protestant worship will be performed near the graves of those who died to defend the cause of the Reformation.

I will finish in my next letter what I have to say upon the religious revival of Saintonge.

Accept, &c. G. DE F.

"PRESIDING ELDERS."

In the last Northern Advocate we found a communication from Rev. John E. Robin headed as above, and containing as we supposed some judicious remarks, which we extract for the benefit of our readers. He says—"Much, as you are aware, has been written on the duties of those who have charge of circuits and stations, but little concerning those who have the charge of districts. The duties of both are solemn, weighty and responsible, and whatever can be suggested by way of improvement in either, we suppose will be acceptable."

Many of our stations and circuits have been powerfully influenced, and their prosperity much enhanced, by the hints and advice given by presiding elders, and perhaps our superiors, or some of them, may be susceptible of a little further improvement by a few hints and a little plain advice, through it may come from a felder instrumentally.

We might here remark, for the sake of information, that the presiding elder's station is not a tract order in the ministry, but merely promotion to office in the Church, and that he ranks no higher in orders than the majority of other ministers in his district. He has a larger field of territory assigned him over which he is appointed to preside, but his real labor, in these days, is far less than what falls appropriately to preachers in our large stations and circuits. From our knowledge of services rendered, we think this is evident. We speak now of present actual labor, and not what we conceive should be done within the sphere of his service. With the blessing of God on the labors of our self-sacrificing ministry, and the almost universal call of our people for more preaching, a great and evident change has taken place in our districts within a few years past, and therefore the amount of labor bestowed and the time allotted to its service is comparatively light to what it once was. What now requires but two, and at most three days to perform, but a few years since required as many weeks. As the work becomes more circumscribed in limits, and pressed within a smaller sphere of observation, it is reasonable to expect that the oversight will be more general and careful, and that the presiding elder has now an opportunity of representing fully, and providing amply for the wants of the charges under his supervision. For wise and prudent objects the office was constituted. It has worked admirably well, and answered a noble purpose in the frame work of our economy. Its being and influence, judiciously presented, is still essential to our prosperity and the stability of our institutions.

The intervening remarks are decidedly in favor of the continuation of the office as essential to the welfare of the Church. He further says:—"The appointment and office, however, on which we speak, needs to be watched. This, like every other good thing, is perilous and liable to abuse; and unworthy and incompetent persons, and idlers in the vineyard may prostitute their office, and the rank and dignity conferred upon them, to base, unworthy, and carnal purposes, and thus among the people, and ministers too, bring the office into disrepute. Permit us, then, to investigate the subject a little farther, and to hint at some points of duty which we conceive as indispensable to the success and respect of the presiding elder, and satisfactory to the ministers and people under his care and administration."

In view of the office, and the respect, rank and dignity, almost universally attached to it, and especially by our people, we conceive that our wisest, and holiest, and most men, both in knowledge and experience, should be appointed to it. Men who are thoroughly versed and established in the doctrine and economy of our Church, and who not only love and venerate our institutions, but are capable also of effectually defending them against the onsets of enemies, and the evils of the dissipated and fault finding. They should also be capable of elucidating and expanding our doctrines and institutions, and show their complete adaptation to the wants of the people, and stamping, if possible, our entire image on the masses with whom they associate. This, in these days, will require men of enlightened understanding, sound and discriminating minds, and keen and vigorous perception. A common man we contend, has no right to the office, and though through the influence of prominent friends, and his own officiousness he may have succeeded to an appointment, he may rest assured that he is only borne with by the people, and cared for by his brethren, merely on account of their respect for the office, and not for any qualification he possesses to fill a place which deservedly belongs to another more competent, and better fitted to discharge lofty and responsible duties, and thus among the people, and ministers too, bring the office into disrepute. The elements of strife and dissension leave and swell like the waters of a stormy ocean. A restless and revolutionary spirit is abroad. The Church in her organization and devices is watched with a malicious, reproachful and envious eye. On every hand may be found those who stand ready to leap upon her altars in order to batter at the throne and dominion of her institutions. Our own beloved Zion, which has hitherto been guarded by an especial protection, is agitated by discord and contentions. In these perilous times, it is expected that presiding elders will act a prominent and efficient part. From them we expect more than their competitors in the warfare. They are captains and leaders of the embattled hosts. They should be ready active, and expert. Men of life, energy and daring. Dignified in presiding, serious in deportment, and wise and quick in decisions, and commanding attention and respect from the multitudes who flock together on the occasion of their meetings. Men, also who can preach as well as do all other things, for the people expect when visited by a presiding elder that they shall hear something above the common order of their stated ministrations. It is extremely embarrassing for the presiding elder, to give out his appointment for six hours close work for each remaining day in the year. Add to this, Methodist ministers in this section are expected to call once at least, in a year, upon every family within the territorial limits of their charges, as a proof of their superior liberality of feeling and anti-sectarianism, to what communion soever such families belong. I do not say that they do all this, but it is required and expected of them by Methodists even. Now when it is remembered that his mornings must be spent in his study, (for his people expect good sermons of course,) that his evenings are occupied with lectures and social meetings, and that his domestic concerns must have a little attention, it will be perceived at once, that if the good brethren and sisters

NEWBURY SEMINARY.

Dear Br. Stevens,—I should have troubled you and the members of the N. H. Conference with another article in reference to this Seminary before now, had I not understood that Br. Morse, of Newbury, was just moved into town, says another: "The long expected review has at last made its appearance, in which I am charged with unkindness and wrong; and it is intimated that such 'insinuations are calculated to do more injury than any communication I can write will do good.'"

Now, let me say, that I did not intend to "insinuate" any thing prejudicial to any person; nor do I wish to do it now, though, were I disposed, perhaps I could.

It may be asked, "Why then did you write the sentence objected to by Br. M.?" I answer, because I then knew, I did know, that an opinion prevailed very extensively among the members of the Conference, that there had been "incompleteness and dishonesty" in the management of the business affairs of the Seminary. In view of this, I wished to say to the Conference, that if such were the case, the "fault" or misfortune was their own, and was no reason why this excellent institution should be suffered to go down. I am of the same opinion now. But if it be "insinuation" to refer to a wide spread opinion, then I am ignorant of the meaning of the term. In vindication of myself, however, and for the encouragement of the friends of the Seminary, I will add the opinion of one who has been intimately acquainted with the affairs of the institution from its commencement, and who is as capable of judging in the matter, perhaps, as any man in New Hampshire or Vermont.

He remarked in substance, not long since, that had the course now pursued by the efficient Board of Trustees been followed from the commencement, the Seminary would not only have been free from debt, but would have had funds on hand for the endowment of a professorship.

But I have no wish for controversy on this point, and have written the above in explanation, and self-defense. I will now submit a plan, by which, with little effort, the whole debt may be cancelled. In my last, I showed that twenty-three cents from each member in the two Conferences, would pay the whole amount. But, since it has been thought best to sell part or all of the land, a less sum will do it. With the avails of the land, and what has been subscribed by individuals, and a shilling from each member of the church, the entire amount may be realized. I propose then that each preacher become responsible for the sum which would fall to his charge, according to the above estimate of one shilling per member, and be raised by his subscribers or contributions among his people. This can be done with ease. Let each one, as the Discipline requires, preach upon the subject of education, and in connection present the claims and wants of the Seminary before the people, and then solicit small sums, as he passes round in visiting, and I will warrant the sum required.

This course, or one similar, should be pursued for several reasons. 1. That all our people may know how much good has been accomplished by this Seminary, of which many of them are ignorant. 2. That they may learn that their preachers have paid, from their half paid salaries, thousands of dollars, while they have done nothing. 3. To show that they especially are benefitted by its existence, and that they will be the chief sufferers, if it does not go on. 4. To relieve those who have borne heavy burdens, is another reason why we should adopt this plan. The burden of sustaining our literary institutions has hitherto fallen on the preachers, and a few private members. These have been called on again and again, and though willing (at least many of them) to do all that duty requires, yet they have become almost discouraged by perpetual demands. As a matter of course, they are the only ones who have taken any interest in the cause of education. Our communion, to be sure, is not wealthy; but let it be sufficiently interested in the matter, and the few thousand dollars we owe to Newbury Seminary and the Wesleyan University, would be forthcoming very soon. This plan will help excite this interest, and carry out the principle of the great apostle, who "would not have one ceased and another burdened." It is not supposed that every one can pay even a shilling, but there are multitudes whose generosity cannot be narrowed down to a shilling, for Newbury especially.

Other reasons might be given, but enough for the present. In conclusion I remark, with Br. Morse, that "while I have any prayer to offer for the prosperity of the M. E. Church, it shall be that she sustain her literary institutions, as one of the surest roads to prosperity, and without which she must suffer great loss." Yes, and I disengage herself in the eyes of enlightened Christians.

Yours in haste, MORE ANON.
Jan. 4, 1844.

For Zion's Herald and Wesleyan Journal.

"OUR PREACHER DID NOT VISIT US ONCE LAST YEAR."

Mr. Editor:—An article headed as above appeared lately in the "Herald," with which, in the main, I am not inclined to find fault. The subject, however, is one upon which I have often reflected with the continuing deepening conviction that much injustice is done ministers in the feelings cherished and the remarks made concerning the frequency and manner of their pastoral visits. I have labored several years in the itinerancy and have never yet given entire satisfaction on this point, although I have in some years paid more than one thousand visits strictly pastoral; nor have I been permitted to succeed a brother any more successful than myself. The truth is, we cannot please all; visit much as we may there will be, after all, real or fancied neglect somewhere. So well convinced of this is our P. E., that he does not ask—"Do you satisfy the people?" but, "Do you satisfy yourself?"

The amount of labor this kind demanded by our congregations is sufficient of itself to break down any minister. One hundred families, expecting to be visited, is not a large estimate of number in connection with our common village stations, and in many of them are twice or thrice the number named. But take the lowest. The most of these will call the minister a stranger if they do not have a visit once a month; and an hour spent at each visit is the very least that can be put up with. He will not be expected on Saturday, the Sabbath, or Monday; so that he is here furnished with six hours close work for each remaining day in the year. Add to this, Methodist ministers in this section are expected to call once at least, in a year, upon every family within the territorial limits of their charges, as a proof of their superior liberality of feeling and anti-sectarianism, to what communion soever such families belong. I do not say that they do all this, but it is required and expected of them by Methodists even. Now when it is remembered that his mornings must be spent in his study, (for his people expect good sermons of course,) that his evenings are occupied with lectures and social meetings, and that his domestic concerns must have a little attention, it will be perceived at once, that if the good brethren and sisters

can have their way about it, he will not be likely to run out.

The motives, too, by which many are moved in demanding so much visiting are, to say the least, of questionable character. "If you visit Mr. A. you will get something," says some good friend, who is interested in filling the minister's purse. Mr. C. has just moved into town, says another: "if you visit him before Elder D., his family will probably attend our meeting," and so on to the end of the chapter. On the other hand the "neglected ones" complain that "Br. F. visits at Col. G.'s or Esq. H.'s twice where he calls on us." "If we were able to pay as much as Br. I. or Sister J. we should be visited as much as they are." "I have a couple of dollars for the minister if he thinks me worth visiting." &c. &c. &c.

Again, the minister sees and converses with a person one day, the next day that person is taken sick; a week perhaps elapses when some one tells the minister "Br. P. has been sick a week, he thinks you care but little about him, and says if he wished to see a minister he shall send for Elder D." Here is injustice growing out of inconsistency. Why did not the sick man send his pastor word that he was sick? Or why did not the leader, as required by Discipline, ascertain and make known the fact?

That ministers should visit their people is admitted, especially should the sick, afflicted, penitent and poor, be cheered and comforted by the presence and sympathies of their pastor. But the amount of visiting with the time when it shall be performed, with all other details pertaining to it, should be left to his discretion, in view of the vows upon him, and a common judgment. If in the exercise of that discretion he visits a few often, others seldom, and some none at all, it should generally be taken for granted that he knows his own business best, and is performing it to the best advantage. If, however, there be a gross or entire neglect, his stewards should kindly remind him of it, and if there be no reformation, complaint should be made in the proper place, i. e. to the P. E. A very different course from this is often pursued, viz. word is passed from lip to ear, that "our minister is very negligent; we expect no revival this year." By and by some busy-body conveys the complaint to him at a time when he is exerting every power of body and mind in his Master's cause. He feels that he has not the confidence or co-operation of his people. His heart is discouraged, his hands hang down, and the prediction of the croaker becomes history: "no revival" is realized.

The fact in the case is our members and friends know not, nor can they know, how large and numerous are the drafts upon the intellectual and physical strength of their ministers. Our annual obituaries and long list of superannuated men tell the tale but in part. Would they but examine the subject carefully, they would find cause for censure: the labors of their pastor would be more highly valued, and his heart less frequently pained by petty complaints.

Maine, Jan. 1, 1845.

We are astonished at our good brother's statement of the expectations of the people in Maine; an "hour" each visit! This is intolerable; we would not allow this in our own family. It would throw every thing into confusion, except on particular occasions, as when he calls to pass with us. We once had charge of a church of more than 500 members, and our plan was to visit them all once a month, the sick once a week, the dangerously sick more often, and we found it no more than the necessary exercise for the body. But we seldom spent more than 15 minutes at each visit.

We made them strictly pastoral; a few direct words of conversation on religious subjects, a short prayer, and a hearty greeting to the little children, and away to another house. We cannot conceive how a family can put up with the interruption of a whole hour every visit; and advise all who have practiced this oppression to reform immediately, except, of course, in sparse country regions, where they must be rare. We contend for frequent, faithful pastoral visits as invaluable, indispensable, and on a well arranged plan, as agreeable to the pastor as necessary to his people.

For Zion's Herald and Wesleyan Journal.

IS THIS TRUE?

Br. Stevens:—If ever there was a time when great searching of heart was necessary for preachers and people, it is now. If we contemplate the state of the world and of the church, we shall find religion far below what it should be. In view of this, should not every one examine his own heart? But not stop there; apply to God with all the heart. The burden of his prayer should be, "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation."—Ps. li. 12, until he feels that God for Christ's sake has answered his prayers, filled him with joy and enabled him to feel his heart burning with love to God, his cause, and precious souls. Then shall Zion prosper, her converts be multiplied, her borders enlarged, and God glorified. Who will do it? how many? Will not the church arise, and "indisputably joined, to battle all proceed?"

O if the church would arise, let the *isms* of the day pass in silence, devote their precious moments to the investigation, and obtaining the full salvation God has prepared for them, what glorious results would follow. O God, help thy people to arise in thy strength. Amen. ISAAC LORD.
Durlam, Me., Dec. 27, 1844.

For Zion's Herald and Wesleyan Journal.

UNIVERSALISM.

Br. Stevens:—In looking into a paper published in this State, called the Gospel Banner, of Dec. 25, I saw, to me an extraordinary announcement of the dedication of a house of worship in Surrey, Me., where, Mr. Drew says, "Universalists, Congregationalists, Baptist and Methodists are the owners, and preachers of all these sects (Br. J. E. Burdman, as the Universalist) sat together in the pulpit, and aided each other in the dedication," and adds, "This looks right and it is right." The correctness of this statement I am not prepared to question. Mr. Drew's opinion of this curious union is given unsolicited. "It is right." If this be true, do those professed gospel ministers think it is right? A Methodist minister sitting aside of and bidding God speed to a man who, if he is intelligently embraced the dogma of Universalism, is in the estimation of all sound and well informed Christians, an infidel in disguise. I happen to have been in the wake of this Rev. Mr. Burdman some few years since, and happen to know his course in opposing the efforts of the temperance cause in the region of Penobscot. It might be well to ask these professed evangelical ministers, if they are acquainted with modern Universalism? If so, in the name of all that's dear to a Christian's heart, how could you sanction such an outrage upon the cause of Christ as to sit with an avowed enemy of the great truths that has cost so much suffering to maintain, and bid God-speed to their propagation in that community? O, for Christ's sake, if this blot is upon the cause of a bleeding, suffering Jesus, wipe it off by confession and repentance. My heart sickens at such amalgamation. Mr. Editor, we have fallen upon strange times. Luther said, in 1500, that it was his firm opinion that

a righteous God would not suffer this wicked world to remain no more than three hundred years. If wickedness will produce destruction, we, as a world, are almost ripe for the worst. T. HILL.
Searsport, Me., Dec. 28, 1844.

A FRAGMENT FOR THE YOUNG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

Are there any among you, my young friends, who desire to preserve health and cheerfulness through life, and at length to reach a good old age? If so, listen to what I am about to tell you. A considerable time ago I read in one of the newspapers of the day that a man had died near London at the advanced age of 110 years; that he had never been ill, and that he had maintained through life a cheerful, happy temperament. I wrote immediately to London, begging to know if in the old man's treatment of himself, there had been any peculiarity which had rendered his life so lengthened and so happy, and the answer I received was as follows:

"He was uniformly kind and obliging to every body he quarrelled with no one; he ate and drank merely that he might not suffer from hunger and thirst, and never beyond what necessity required. From his earliest youth he never allowed himself to be unemployed. These were the only means he used."

I took a note of this in a little book where I generally write all that I am anxious to remember, and very soon afterwards I observed in another paper, that a woman had died near Stockholm, at 115 years of age, that she was never ill, and was always of a contented, happy disposition. I immediately wrote to Stockholm, to learn what means this old woman had used for preserving her health, and now read the answer:

"She was always a great lover of cleanliness, and in the daily habit of washing her face, feet, and hands in cold water, and as often as opportunity offered, she bathed in the same; she never ate or drank any delicacies or sweet-meats; seldom coffee or tea, and never wine."

Of this, likewise, I took a note in my little book. Some time after this, again I read that near St. Petersburg a man had died who had enjoyed good health till he was 120 years old. Again I took my pen and wrote to St. Petersburg, and here is the answer:

"He was an early riser, and never slept beyond seven hours at a time; he was never idle; he worked and employed himself chiefly in the open air, and particularly in his garden. Whether he walked or sat in his chair, he never permitted himself to sit at any, or in a bent posture, but was always perfectly straight. The luxurious and effeminate habits of citizens he held in great contempt."

After having read all this in my little book, I said to myself, "You will be a foolish man indeed not to profit by the example and experience of these old people." I then wrote out all I was able to discover about these happy old people upon a large card, which I suspended over my writing desk, so that I might have it always before my eyes to remind me what I ought to do, and from what I should refrain. Every morning and evening I read over the contents of my card, and obliged myself to conform to its rules.

And now, my dear young readers, I can assure you, on the word of an honest man, that I am much happier and in better health than I used to be. Formerly, I had headaches nearly every day, and now I suffer scarcely once in three or four months. Before I began these rules I hardly dared venture out in rain or snow from fear of catching cold. In former times, a walk of half an hour's length fatigued and exhausted me; now I walk miles without weariness.

Imagine, then, the happiness I experience; for there are few feelings so cheering to the spirit as those of constant health and vigor. But, alas! there is something in which I cannot imitate these happy old people—and that is, that I have not been accustomed to all this from my youth.

Oh that I were young again, that I might imitate them in all things, that I might be happy and long-lived as they were!

Little children who read this, you are the fortunate ones who are able to adopt in perfection this kind of life. What, then, prevents your living henceforward as healthily and happily as the old women of Stockholm, or as long and usefully as the old men of London and St. Petersburg?

LATE INSTRUCTION.

Socrates, in his old age, learned to play upon a musical instrument. Cato, aged 80, began to learn Greek; and Plutarch, his old age, acquired Latin. John Galsini, of Valencia, in Spain, did not begin the study of *ballo-telles*, until he was 40 years old. Henry Spelman, having in his youth neglected the sciences, resumed them at the age of 50, with extraordinary success. Fairfax, after having been the general in the parliamentary army in England, went to Oxford, and took his degree, as Doctor of Laws. Colbert, when minister, and almost 60 years of age, returned to his Latin and his law; in a situation where the neglect of one if not both, might have been thought of as excusable; and Monsieur le Tellier, chancellor of France, resorted to the learning of logic that he might dispute with his grandchildren. Sir John Davies, at the age of 25, produced a poem on "The Immortality of the Soul," and in his 62d year, as Mr. Thomas Campbell facetiously observes, when a judge and statesman, another on dancing.

GEMS FROM PIOUS AUTHORS.

PREACHING THE GOSPEL.—I do not wish for any heaven on earth, besides that of preaching the precious Gospel of Jesus Christ to immortal souls.—Henry Martyn.

CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES.—The Scriptures are the circumference of faith, the round of which it walks, and every point of which compass it toucheth, yet the centre of it is Christ. That is the polar star on which it resteth.—Matthew Henry.

THE SABBATH.—The happiness of heaven is the constant keeping of a Sabbath. Heaven is called a Sabbath, to make those who love Sabbath for Heaven, and to make those who long for Heaven love Sabbath.—Ibid.

EARTHLY THINGS.—When earthly things engross a minister's attention, he will think more of this world than the next, and his preaching will savor more of the casket than the jewels. If he is not a spiritual man himself, he has no reason to suppose that God will bless him with a spiritual people.—Rowland Hill.

BODILY INFIRMITIES.—Bodily infirmities, like breaks in a wall, have often become avenues through which the light of heaven has entered to the soul, and make the imprisoned inmate long for release.—Anon.

DOING THE WILL OF GOD.—I had rather do the will of God, than be able to work miracles.—Luther.

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